



GEN Z

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE AMERICAN TEENAGER

KREIG TODD



A monochromatic, teal-tinted photograph of a person in a hoodie with their right fist raised in a crowd. The background is blurred with bokeh light effects. The image is framed by two vertical white lines on the left and right sides.

GEN Z.

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Who Are They?

Overview

- **Born b/w 2000-2015**
- **Largest Generation in US**
 - **25% (Millennials come in at 24%)**
- **Gen Z makes up 1/3 of the World Population**

From Their Perspective

- Google has *always* existed
- Email is Formal; Texting is Casual
- They've never licked a stamp
- Use 3-5 screens a day
 - Compared to 1-2 for Millennials
- Prefer “snackable” content

What do they think?

- **Open-minded to:**
 - **Religion**
 - **Sex**
 - **Lifestyles**
- **Feel empowered to change institutions**
 - **BLM pushes back on Police**
 - **Sexual/Moral revolution pushes back on Religion**

By the Stats...

- **78% believe in God**
 - **Not necessarily the Christian God**
- **41% attend religious services weekly**
 - **Gen Z, generally, is apathetic toward religion**
- **83% prefer face-to-face communication**

RE: The Church...

- **Gen Z has a negative view of the Church**
- **This is rooted in a belief that the Church is:**
 - **Anti-homosexual**
 - **Judgmental**
 - **Hypocritical**
 - **Old-fashioned**

RE: The Church Cont...

- **29% (3/10) NCT: Problem of evil = a barrier to faith.**
- **28% (1/4) GZ: Science & Bible are complementary**
- **82% (4/5) CGT: Church is relevant**
- **61% (3/5) CF who don't think church is important
"find God elsewhere."**
- **21% (1/5) Teens choose a negative, judgmental
image to represent a Christian Church**

Characteristics

(Self-Described)

- **Loyal (85%)**
- **Compassionate (73%)**
- **Thoughtful (80%)**
- **Open-minded (70%)**
- **Responsible (69%)**
- **Determined (74%)**

Role Models of Gen Z

Who made the cut?

- **Parents (69%)**
- **Teachers (50%+)**
- **Coaches (NS)**
- **Peers (NS)**
- **Fictional Characters (NS)**

Who didn't make the cut?

- **Bosses (NS)**
- **Religious Leaders (8%)**
- **Pro Athletes (4%)**
- **Celebrities (5%)**
- **Political Leaders (3%)**

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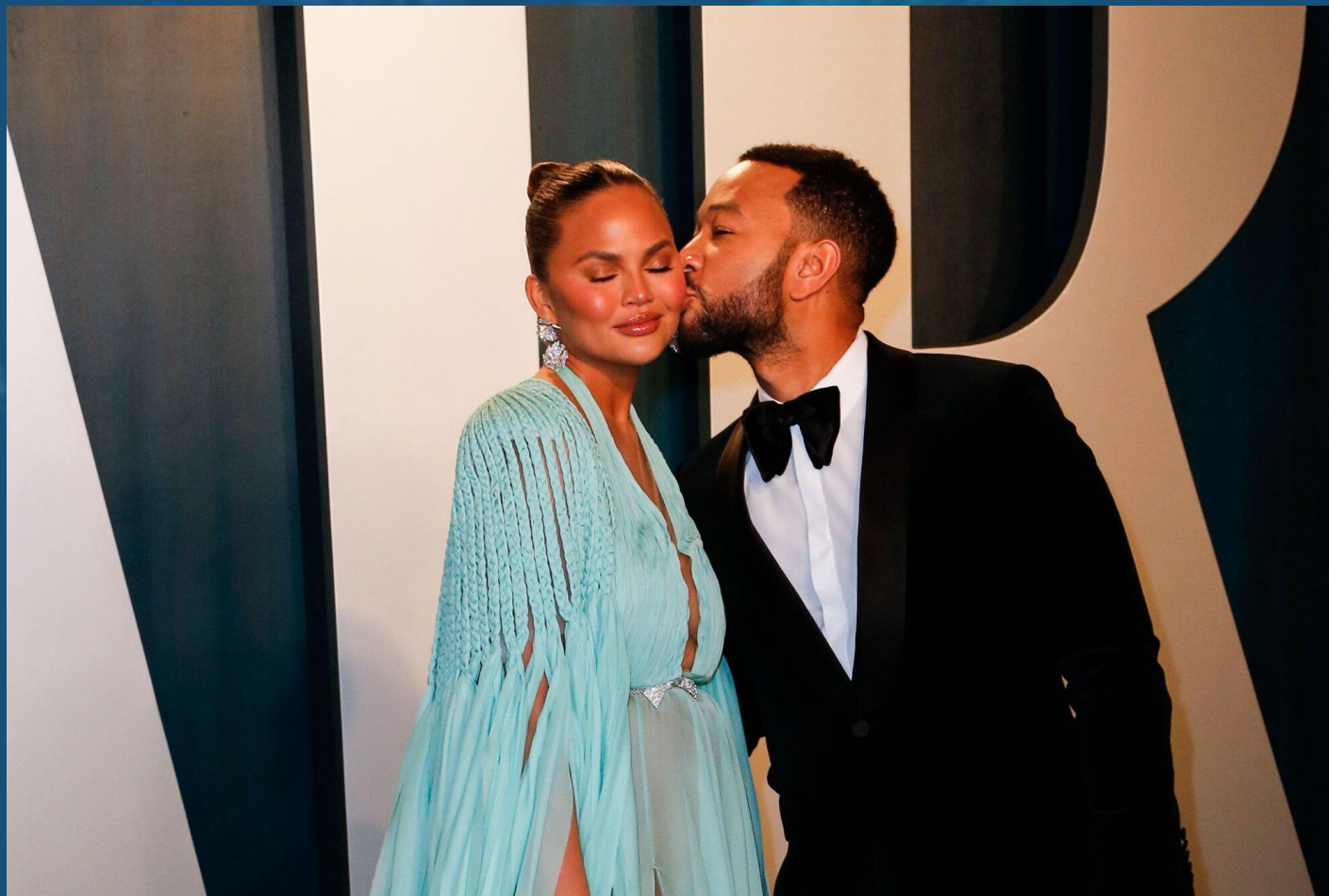


MORAL THERAPEUTIC DEISM (MTD)

GEN Z'S RELIGION

Name a Cultural
Influencer
(AKA: Celebrity)

Chrissy Teigen



Katy Perry



COSMIC ENERGY

Taylor Swift



MTD Tenants

- **A God exists who created and ordered the world; he watches over human life on earth.**
- **God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught by the Bible and most world religions.**
- **The central goal in life is to be happy and feel good about oneself.**

MTD Tenants Cont.

- **God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when he is needed to resolve a problem.**
- **Good people go to heaven when they die.**



MORAL THERAPEUTIC DIESM (MTD)

GEN Z'S RELIGION

A person with a backpack is walking away from the camera on a dirt path in a vast, hazy wilderness landscape. The person is silhouetted against the bright sky. The foreground is filled with dry, brown grasses. The background shows rolling hills and a distant horizon under a clear, bright sky.

OUR CALLING

A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

Starting With Us All...

- **Do I affirm any tenants of MTD, whether it be implicitly or explicitly?**
- **Am I able to recognize, evaluate, and refute the moral teachings of culture? If not, what do I need to do to be better equipped?**

Starting With Us All...

- **Am I willing to invest the time and energy into understanding culture so that I can better teach my child/student to live and walk in faithful obedience? If not, why not?**
- **Do I live out the example of my faith before my child/student on a regular (and consistent) basis? If not, what must I change?**

A photograph of a family of three in a warm, outdoor setting. A man in a striped sweater is on the left, a woman with braids is on the right, and a young child is in the center. They are all looking towards each other, suggesting a moment of connection. The background is a soft-focus natural scene with trees and foliage. The text is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**Parents are the primary
influence in the lives of
their children and students.**

The Shema (Deut. 6.4-9)

Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.

Potential Game Plans

- **Make your faith a Sunday-Saturday thing.**
- **Ask questions about Sunday School Lessons & Sermons.**
 - **Tell your children and students what your takeaway was, too.**
- **Know that your Gen Z child has a great deal of pressure on him/her.**

Potential Game Plans

- **Speak God's truth into their lives (Eph. 4.15)**
 - **Be intentional about having conversations—both the easy & hard ones (2 Cor. 2.4)**
 - **Listen to their opinions and concerns (Jms. 1.19)**
 - **Gently, yet firmly, correct any erring opinions or thoughts that do not align with God's word (2 Cor. 10.5)**

A family of four is sitting in a field at sunset. The father is in the center, smiling, wearing a grey beanie and a blue plaid shirt. The mother is to his left, wearing a white beanie and a black top. Two children are on the right, one wearing a red beanie and a white jacket. They are all looking towards the right. The background shows a field of tall grass and a tent on the right. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting late afternoon or early evening.

**You teach what you know,
but you reproduce what
you are.**

DR. HOWARD HENDRICKS

A photograph of two men sitting in a tent campsite. The man on the left is wearing a red and black plaid shirt and khaki pants, sitting on a small stool. The man on the right is wearing a red and white plaid shirt and blue jeans, sitting on the ground. An acoustic guitar is leaning against a tent on the right. In the foreground, there is a campfire pit with logs. The background shows a grassy field and a forested hill under a cloudy sky.

**True discipleship can only
take place in the context
of relationships.**

DR. DAVID ODOM
NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A group of hands of various skin tones are stacked together in a circle, symbolizing unity and support. The background is a dark, blue-tinted image of the hands.

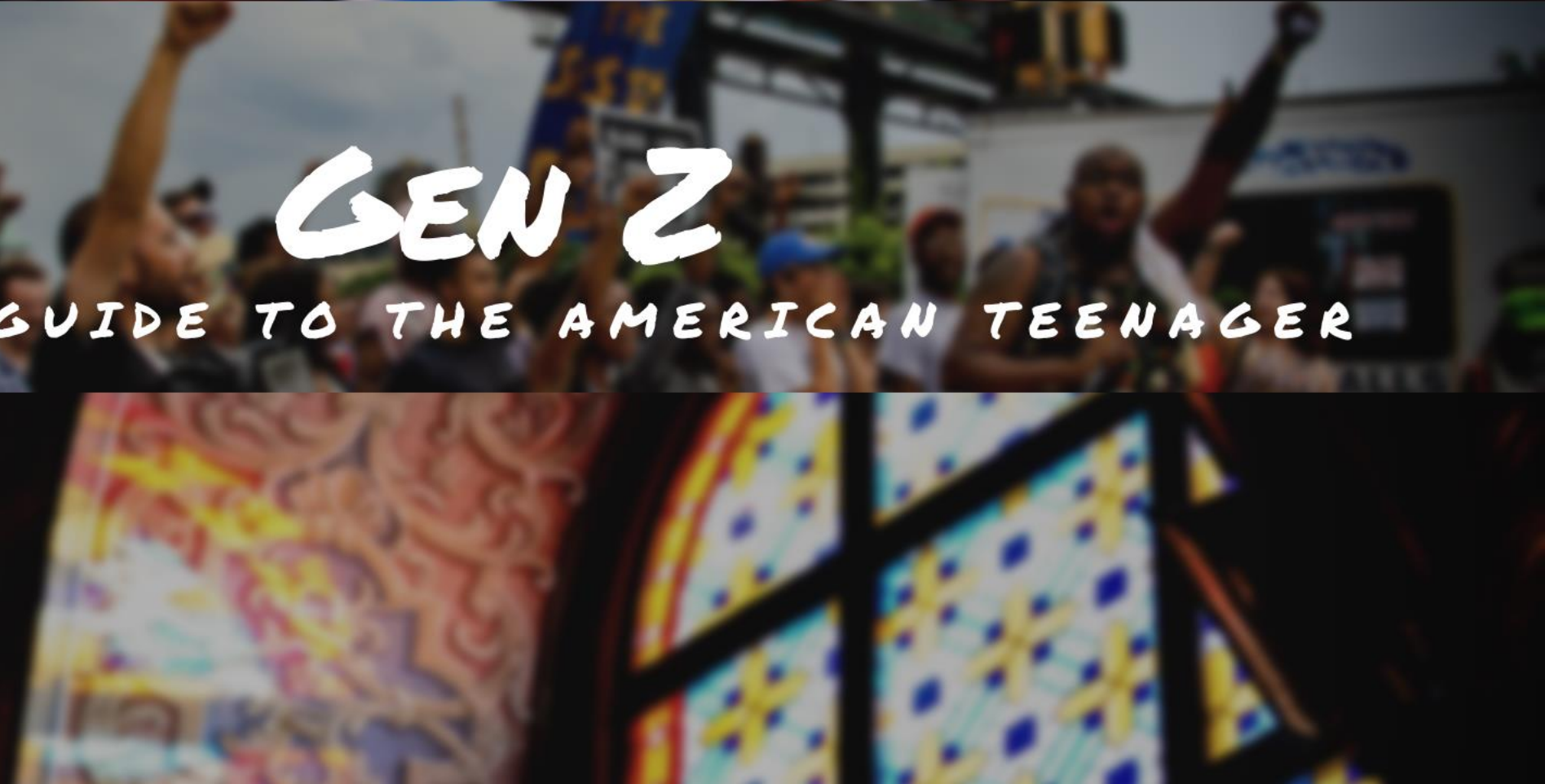
**As the church, we are
behind you 100%, though
we are only with you 1% of
the time.**



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Sources & Acknowledgements

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Seemiller, Corey, and Meghan Grace. *Generation Z Goes to College*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016.

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